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ART. IX.—CRITICAL NOTICES.

- 1.—*Colombia, its Present State, in Respect of Climate, Soil, Productions, Population, Government, Commerce, Revenue, Manufactures, Arts, Literature, Manners, Education, and Inducements to Emigration.* By Colonel FRANCIS HALL, Hydrographer in the Service of Colombia. 12mo. pp. 131. Philadelphia.

THE author of this volume is favorably known among us, by his book of travels in Canada and the United States, written some seven or eight years ago. He there showed himself a man of inquiry and observation, a writer of good taste and judgment, and a sprightly narrator of such events as came under his notice. The title to the present work promises more than is performed, but we nevertheless have much that is new and valuable concerning a country, which is every day gaining an honorable rank among the nations, and settling down under free, practical, and permanent institutions. The late successes in Peru, which, to be sure, were to have been anticipated, may be considered not less auspicious to Colombia, than to the liberties of Peru itself. The military operations, by which these successes have been gained, are among the strongest proofs that could be given of the stability of the Colombian government, the resources of the country, and the readiness of the people to make all due sacrifices to maintain the rights, and secure the freedom, which they have fought so bravely during the last fifteen years to establish. There is now much good hope, that all embarrassments, whether of a pecuniary nature, or resulting from the difficulty of organising a new government under many disadvantages, will speedily be overcome, and that the Republic will gradually acquire solidity and strength beyond the power of accident, or any combination of circumstances to move.

Colonel Hall begins his Sketch with a geographical outline of Colombia, and remarks briefly on the climate, soil, and productions. He speaks with freedom of the government, and points out its defects in theory and practice. The impressions he leaves are not very encouraging; many evils exist, which had become rooted in the character and manners of the people, during the long ages in which they were borne down by the yoke of Spanish tyranny; absurd laws and practices had grown into use, which it is difficult to abolish; the *central system* is not the best calculated to secure a prompt obedience to the orders of the supreme ruling power, nor to impress on subordinate officers a sense of their re-

sponsibility ; the electoral organisation is imperfect, and the judicial administration is hampered by the old legal forms. Some of these difficulties grow out of the very necessity of the case, and others betray a want of experience, if not of wisdom, in the legislative and executive departments. Springing from these sources, their natural tendency will be to correct themselves.

No favorable picture is given of the administration of justice.

‘The civil and criminal codes,’ observes the author, ‘are little more than a collection of superstitions and abuses, under the names of Laws of Castile, Royal Ordinances, Laws of the Indies, and various other compilations of Spanish decrees, and colonial regulations, from which, to the vexation of the suitor, and benefit of the lawyer, contradictory decisions may be extracted on every possible point of litigation. This evil is felt and acknowledged by the government ; it has been proposed to introduce the new Spanish criminal code. Trial by jury is happily established in cases of libel, and the legislature has declared in favor of introducing it generally, in all cases to which it is applicable.’ p. 26.

Under the old colonial system, it is well known, that various distinctions existed between the European Spaniards, Creoles, Indians, negroes, and mixed castes, and that all but the first labored under many disabilities. These distinctions are now done away by the laws of the nation ; every free native inhabitant is a citizen, possessing equal rights and privileges, whatever may be the shade of his skin, or the chronicle of his ancestry. ‘The justice of this policy,’ says Colonel Hall, ‘has been rewarded by the exertions of the people of color, in aid of the independence of the country, of which they have been the firmest supporters, and Colombia reckons among her best and bravest officers, men, whom Spanish pride and tyranny deemed unworthy to sit at a white man’s table.’ On the 21st of July, 1821, a law was passed for abolishing slavery, and proper measures adopted for carrying it into effect. No slaves can be imported or exported, and a tax is levied for a gradual manumission of those now in the country. The children of slaves, born since the above date, are free, the owners of their parents being entitled to their services till the age of eighteen, as a compensation for their maintenance.

The author complains of the narrow policy, which the government seems inclined to follow, in regard to the regulations of commerce. Restraints and discouragements are thrown in the way of foreign merchants, whereas nothing is more plain, under present circumstances, than the wisdom of inducing as many to settle there, with their enterprise and their capital, as may be tempted to do it, by reasonable prospects of an entire security of their property, and a fair competition in trade. Some of the laws, and the general tone of feeling bear strong marks of the old jealousy of foreigners,

which existed in the colonies, and which must be rooted out, before the republic can reap the immense advantages of an unshackled trade, and a free intercourse with all other countries.

The latter half of Colonel Hall's work is devoted to the subject of emigration to Colombia. He describes the advantages to be expected by emigrants, the character of the inhabitants as affecting their condition and success, the best modes of emigrating, and the preparations necessary for the undertaking. He also gives directions as to the choice of place, and recounts the difficulties to be apprehended, arising from difference of language, customs, and religion. These points are treated with brevity, but with much good sense, and in a manner which proves the writer to have been well informed on the topics he discusses. The extract here subjoined, touches on a subject, which will be likely one day to produce a deep sensation in all the South American republics.

'The matter of *Région* requires more consideration. A law was published, dated August 22nd, 1821, to abolish the Inquisition, and restore to the ecclesiastical courts jurisdiction in matters of religion, according to the canons and customs of the Roman Catholic church; the 3d article of this law says; 'Juridical proceedings in such cases (in matters of faith) shall take place only with respect to Roman Catholics born in Colombia, their children, and those who, having come from other countries, shall have enrolled themselves in the parish registers of the Catholics; *but not with respect to strangers, who may come to establish themselves temporarily or permanently, nor with their descendants; who can in no manner be molested on account of their belief, though they ought to respect the Roman Catholic worship and religion.*

'That *Toleration* is here established, as to the creed of foreigners, there can be no doubt, but it is not equally clear, that this toleration includes the liberty openly to profess and celebrate the rites of their respective forms of worship; in such a case the law would require *interpretation*, and in what spirit would the interpretation be made? As far as respects the opinions of the individuals who compose the government, and, generally, of all the enlightened men throughout the country, there is little doubt it would be favorable, but the interference of the clergy must in such a case be reckoned on; nor can it be denied, that the government, perhaps from an exaggerated calculation of clerical influence, has manifested a disposition to humor the prejudice of this body, which may render it a problematical question, how far the liberality of its private opinions might control its public conduct. The clergy, on the other hand, are no strangers to the contempt in which their doctrines are held by the enlightened part of the community; but, as long as this inward feeling is accompanied by no overt act of secession, they console themselves with the influence

they possess over the ignorant majority, and the knowledge that this influence must ensure them the consideration of the government. The toleration of a *rival church* would, however, prove a very different affair; here is not only division of opinion, but threatened division of pelf and power, and the resistance to such innovation would, doubtless, be proportioned to the interests jeopardised. Travellers have noticed the apparent liberality of the South American clergy towards strangers of a different creed, but their bigotry in such cases is only sleeping, because unprovoked; a solitary Protestant traveller may be an object of curiosity, but not of dread or suspicion. Not so, when individuals of the same persuasion appear in hundreds or thousands. The abuse of heretics has long been the favorite theme in the pulpits of Caracas, and this city has been repeatedly threatened with a second earthquake, in judgment of such abominations. Without pretending to foretell what course would be followed by the government, or sanctioned by public opinion, when a case of toleration, in the full sense of the word, practically occurs, we may observe, that if Colombia pretends to tread in the steps of the United States, and to grow powerful by the admission of foreigners into her bosom, some change in her religious system, either legally sanctioned, or conventionally allowed, must eventually take place. The ecclesiastical regulations, which at present interdict marriages betwixt Roman Catholics and heretics, are, of themselves, a barrier against the amalgamation of foreigners with the existing population, and exemplify the impossibility of combining religious intolerance with a liberal form of civil government.' pp. 94—97.

The volume closes with a series of itineraries very useful to the traveller, specifying the distances of places on some of the principal roads, with remarks on the aspect of the country through which they pass.

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- 2.—*Seven Lectures on Female Education, inscribed to Mrs Garnett's Pupils, at Elm Wood, Essex County, Virginia, by their very sincere Friend*, JAMES M. GARNETT. Second Edition. 18mo. pp. 261. Richmond, T. W. White. 1824.

If the approbation of distinguished names be considered a proof of the merits of a book, these Lectures have no ordinary claims to the notice of the public. We insert the following extract of a letter from Chief Justice Marshall, as well on account of the opinion he gives of this work, as of the sentiments he expresses in regard to the influence of the female character on society.

'I read the first edition,' says Judge Marshall, 'when first published, and was so well pleased with it, as to place it in the